

NEWSLETTER

ReFresh Milwaukee: City Launches First Sustainability Plan

SUSTAINABILITY PLAN SETS STAGE FOR NEXT 10 YEARS

On a sunny July morning this summer, a flotilla of boats, kayaks and canoes, along with 100 people on land, gathered in the Milwaukee Estuary to celebrate Mayor Barrett's launch of the Green Team's sustainability plan: *ReFresh Milwaukee*.

The Plan is the result of an 18-month long deliberative community planning process. It's a strategic roadmap that addresses eight issue areas, identifies two catalytic sustainability projects in the city, and is accompanied by a dynamic web presence. Priority-setting for issue areas came from citizen input and responds directly to their sustainability-related needs and priorities. "We can build it, fix it, ship it, grow it and design it," says Mayor Barrett in an intro letter to the plan (see page 2). "We can do all those things when it comes to our neighborhoods and quality of life. Sustainability is the fuel for the great cities of the 21st century and the hope to revitalize our neighborhoods."

ReFresh Milwaukee sets a 10-year strategic roadmap that aims to improve Milwaukee's sustainability. During the planning process, the Green Team collected over 1,000 resident surveys and met with an additional 435 people and 85 businesses in person via five town hall meetings and four business outreach sessions.

ReFresh Milwaukee outlines the need for action and baselines conditions, identifies goals and targets, and highlights priority
(continued on page 2)



ReFresh Milwaukee

FRESH COAST. FRESH IDEAS.
 A Vision for Community Sustainability
 City of Milwaukee Sustainability Plan 2013-2023



Our semi-annual newsletter helps to update residents, businesses, and City employees on current and future Office of Environmental Sustainability programs, projects, and initiatives. Thank you to Mayor Tom Barrett for his nationally recognized leadership on sustainability issues and thanks to those Milwaukeeans who work to make the city a more sustainable place to call home. If someone you know would like to receive the OES Newsletter by e-mail, request a copy at sustainability@milwaukee.gov.

ReFresh MKE

(from page 1)

strategies in each of the eight issue areas: buildings, energy, food systems, human capital, land and urban ecosystems, mobility, resource recovery, and water. The Green Team and the public wanted a mix of short to long-term targets and a focus on improvements that can be measured and tracked.

In addition, Mayor Barrett and the team wanted this document to be a “living,” dynamic plan, so it will exist almost entirely online and actively engage residents through the “I AM ReFreshMKE” campaign and resource catalogue on the www.refreshmke.com portal. OES will work with City departments and the community to provide yearly scorecards on progress so Milwaukeeans can track *ReFresh Milwaukee*’s benefits to our neighborhoods.

“*ReFresh Milwaukee* is a comprehensive effort,” said Matt Howard, OES Director. “It’s not just a planning document, it’s a call to action and it’s a path forward for creating a more sustainable city.” The planning process was funded by the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act and the Brico Fund, and included corporate partners MillerCoors, Johnson Controls and The Water Council.

For more information and or to download a copy of the plan, visit www.refreshmke.com. ●



Mayor Barrett unveils *ReFresh Milwaukee* on shores of the Inner Harbor. Photo: Tim McCollow

FROM THE MAYOR...

Dear Milwaukee,

I would like to thank all of you who worked so hard on Milwaukee’s first Sustainability Plan: *ReFresh Milwaukee*. Your comments, questions and ideas have helped shape a new vision of community sustainability for our great city.

When I formed Milwaukee’s first public-private Green Team in 2004, I never imagined the spirit of that work would continue into my third term as mayor. In 2011, I reconvened the original Green Team and thanked them for their hard work and for setting a solid foundation on which to build a more sustainable community. Their 2005 Green Team Report helped guide city policies and projects. The City of Milwaukee implemented 87 percent of their recommendations between 2005 and 2012, demonstrating our commitment to sustainability.

In order to build off this important, early work, I appointed a new Green Team in 2012 and charged them with developing the city’s first Sustainability Plan, *ReFresh Milwaukee*. How can we reinvigorate our great city? How do we reinvest in our neighborhoods? And ultimately, how do we build a city where every neighborhood is a great place to live and raise a family? This was the challenge of the new Green Team and I think they delivered with this dynamic road map.

Great cities aren’t made overnight, nor are they “accidents.” Just as our city forefathers took purposeful steps to connect Milwaukee’s first three settlements, protect our lakefront, and build innovative infrastructure, so too must our current generation take ownership of our challenges and future. *ReFresh Milwaukee* is a call to action around a community-endorsed set of goals and strategies that creates smart economic growth while preserving our finite natural resources for our children and their children.

Our climate is telling us that the old ways won’t work anymore. *ReFresh Milwaukee* is our roadmap on how to do more better, but with less. I hope it’s also a spark for community dialogue that leads to practical improvements in all of our neighborhoods.

ReFresh Milwaukee provides guidance under a 10 year timeframe for personal goal-setting, as well citywide goal-setting. Individual responsibility complimented with collective action will yield impressive benefits. As a result, Milwaukee will be America’s undisputed Fresh Coast Capital.

The Bloomberg Mayors Challenge and IBM Smarter Cities showed that Milwaukee is already a top innovative city. Tomorrow’s planners, innovators, educators and civic leaders won’t turn to the East or West Coasts for ideas. They’ll turn inland to America’s Fresh Coast for the next big idea.

Our world-renown water technology companies, good food movement, smart energy companies, stormwater management strategies and urban environmental revitalization successes will demonstrate definitively to the rest of the world what I already know: Milwaukeeans know how to get things done.

We can build it, fix it, ship it, grow it and design it. We can do all those things when it comes to our neighborhoods and quality of life. Sustainability is the fuel for the great cities of the 21st century and the hope to revitalize our neighborhoods.

Let’s begin the journey to a greater, more sustainable future. Let’s *ReFresh Milwaukee* together!

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads 'Tom Barrett'.

Tom Barrett
Mayor, City of Milwaukee

ME² TO CONTINUE INTO 2014 WITH NEW FINANCING SOLUTIONS FOR BUSINESSES

Through the Milwaukee Energy Efficiency (Me²) program for commercial properties, OES is helping rebuild Milwaukee from the inside out. Me² helps owners of existing buildings in the City of Milwaukee replace the aging lighting, heating and cooling systems, and pay for those improvements as they save on their energy bills.

Me² helps businesses reinvest dollars into their building that they otherwise would have wasted on high energy bills from outdated equipment. Commercial Me² has approved more than \$16 million of energy saving projects on over 130 properties.

NEW FINANCING FROM ME² LEADS TO BETTER BUILDINGS

In July, 2013, the City of Milwaukee approved new Property Assessed Clean Energy (PACE) financing (City Ordinance 304-26.5). Alderman Michael Murphy led the effort on this legislation, which was also sponsored by Alderman Nik Kovac and signed by Mayor Tom Barrett.

Me² Property Assessed Clean Energy (PACE) Financing helps commercial property owners affordably finance building upgrades like heating and cooling systems, lighting, controls, and solar. Commercial building owners can pay for improvements over time as they reap the benefits of lower energy and maintenance bills.



Sheldon Oppermann of the Building Owners and Managers Association helps announce the new PACE program. Oppermann is flanked by Mayor Tom Barrett, Alderman Murphy, and Charles McGinnis of Johnson Controls, Inc. (R-L)

Payments for the improvements are collected through a voluntary municipal special charge. The special charge is attached to the property, not the owner, and is paid back through the property tax system over time. This innovative financing program helps make **compelling economic sense** for building owners and their tenants.

PACE Financing is good for building owners and the community. It creates local jobs, better buildings, and a better environment. With a public-private partnership, private capital is used to supply the upfront funding for the work, so that local government budgets are not burdened.

Up to \$100 million is being made available through a partnership between the Milwaukee Economic Development Corporation (MEDC) and Clean Fund.

LEARN MORE

The City of Milwaukee is teaming up with the Building Owners and Managers Association to host a **PACE Financing Lunch & Learn** for the real estate community. Join us on **September 25** from 11:30 to 1:00 at City Center at 735 N Water Street. Participants will learn how to participate in Milwaukee's *Better Building Challenge* and how to access PACE financing. [CLICK HERE](#) to register.

Get details on the program, and submit your interest form online at: smartenergypays.com/businesses.

Contact Erick Shambarger at 414-286-8556 to learn how you can take advantage of these resources to make your building more efficient and cheaper to operate. ●





ENERGY EFFICIENCY FINANCING CONTINUES FOR MILWAUKEE HOMES

Energy is essential to lighting and heating our homes. However, the cost of energy can place a real burden on household budgets. And that burden can be especially high for older homes that do not have sufficient insulation or with outdated heated and cooling equipment.

The Milwaukee Energy Efficiency program, or Me², helps Milwaukee homeowners afford energy-saving home improvements. These home improvements save energy, improve the comfort and value of our homes, reduce pollution, create local jobs, and add lasting value to the community.

Since 2011, **over 1,000 Milwaukee homes** have been upgraded with help from Me². The program through June of 2013 stimulated \$6.3 million in projects, all completed by private sector contractors who used local labor.

Homeowners who completed the program will save 29% on their energy bills on average, with estimated annual savings of \$557.

Projects completed before August 31 were eligible for stimulus incentives. However, it's not too late to complete home energy projects because of continuing incentives and financing.

TAP INTO INCENTIVES

Upgrade your home with help from Me². Milwaukee homeowners can continue to access thousands of dollars in rebates from the [Focus on Energy](#) program as well as affordable project financing from Summit Credit Union.

And the City is streamlining the process for energy saving improvements. You can now work directly with a Me² contractor on eligible home improvements such as insulation, air sealing, and high efficiency furnaces, boilers, and hot water heaters.

The Me² program is open to customers of all income levels. However, low to moderate income homeowners may also qualify for enhanced rewards from the Focus on Energy program.

AFFORDABLE FINANCING

With Me², you can pay for home energy improvements as you save on your energy bills, with an affordable financing plan through Summit Credit Union. Me² and Summit Credit Union have teamed up to provide low interest, no money down, no home equity financing to qualified homeowners. Apply online to be pre-approved: it's quick and easy.

For more information, visit SmartEnergyPays.com/homeowners

ME² SUPPORTS



COMMUNITY JOBS

While there may be a shortage of jobs in the Milwaukee, there is no shortage or work to be done improving our homes and commercial buildings.

The City of Milwaukee implemented a Community Workforce Agreement as part of the Me² program. This workforce agreement ensures that the jobs created through the Me² program benefit people who live in the City.

All commercial and residential contractors are committed to hiring City residents as part of the Residents Preference Program and paying family supporting wages. Workers also must have safety training. Additionally, minority-owned and operated Milwaukee firms such as Intec, Weatherization Services, and Pyramid Electric have collectively completed hundreds of projects supported by Me².

JOIN OTHERS WHO HAVE SAVED MONEY & ENERGY WITH ME²

- 1,024** Milwaukeeans have improved their homes through Me²
- 137** Businesses have made more efficient buildings through Me²

START SAVING TODAY!

Get started at: SmartEnergyPays.com

Already know what you're looking for? Contact one of [our Participating Me² residential contractors](#)



Milwaukee
SHINES

FOR A SUSTAINABLE SOLAR FUTURE

GROUP PURCHASE PROGRAM LEADS TO GREAT SOLAR SAVINGS

Milwaukee's Riverwest neighborhood is seeing a lot more solar on rooftops, thanks to the pilot solar group buy program Solar Riverwest. The program was a partnership of Milwaukee Shines, the Riverwest Cooperative Alliance, and the Midwest Renewable Energy Association.

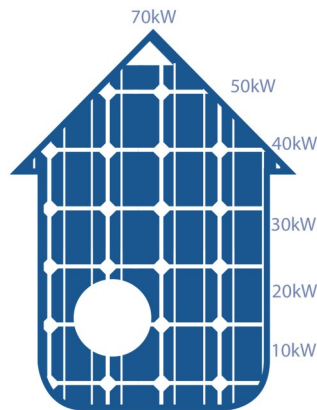
Homeowners were able to take advantage of record low solar pricing through a limited-time solar group purchase program. The program helps residents invest in lower cost solar installations through the power of volume-purchasing.

- **Over 15 home owners** committed to installing solar for a total of **over 50 kW!** (Compare that to 2011, with 11 total solar installs in the *entire* City).
- Milwaukee's own Helios Solar Works panels were be utilized in the installations.
- At least 40% of the labor hours on the installs were completed by Milwaukee residents that have been unemployed or underemployed.
- All participants completed energy efficiency improvements through the Me² program, which not only saves on energy bills but reduces the size needed to power the entire home from solar!

WHAT'S NEXT? MORE SOLAR!

Get details on what a program like this entails at www.SolarRiverwest.org. If you are interested in a solar group buy program for your neighborhood, let us know! Contact Milwaukee Shines at solar@milwaukee.gov or (414) 286-5593. We can help you get a similar program started in your own neighborhood. ●

**Over 15 homes added solar &
over 50 kW of solar was installed
through Solar Riverwest!**



A home with new solar panels in Riverwest

MILWAUKEE SHINES SOLAR FINANCING MAKES SAYING YES TO SOLAR EASY

Whether you are considering solar for your home or business, Milwaukee Shines also offers solar financing to help make solar a reality.

RESIDENTIAL FINANCING:

The City of Milwaukee has partnered with Summit Credit Union to offer low-interest loans for Milwaukee homeowners.

- **Eligible Participants:** City of Milwaukee homeowners, 1-3 unit owner-occupied residences
- **Loan Size:** Up to \$20,000
- **Interest Rate:** Low-Interest Fixed Rate
- **Terms:** Up to 15 years. No penalties for early payment, no fees, no down payments

COMMERCIAL FINANCING:

Me² can provide financing solutions for your solar and energy efficiency projects. Commercial building owners can pay for improvements over time as they reap the benefits of lower energy and maintenance bills. Payments for the improvement are collected through a voluntary municipal special charge. Read more about this new way to finance solar for your business on page 3 or visit www.smartenergypays.com

WANT MORE INFO ON SOLAR?

Discover how the technology works, what incentives are available, and how much it might cost at:

www.MilwaukeeShines.com

solar@milwaukee.gov
(414) 286-5593

[Follow us on Twitter](#)
[Like us on Facebook](#)

HOME GR/OWN

HOME GR/OWN WORK BEGINS

Milwaukee's HOME GR/OWN Initiative hit the ground running in early July as Tim McCollow from the City of Milwaukee's Office of Environmental Sustainability was named HOME GR/OWN Project Manager. He is the City's first staffer to work full-time on community food systems and food insecurity in Milwaukee.

HOME GR/OWN is officially in start-up mode: establishing budgets, developing initial projects and submitting grants. HOME GR/OWN is working on several pilot projects with our initial partners including Walnut Way, Zilber Family Foundation and Alice's Garden.

A second component of work focuses on HOME GR/OWN's connection to the City of Milwaukee's Sustainability Plan: *ReFresh Milwaukee*. HOME GR/OWN is one of two catalytic projects that embody multiple goals.

In the public input phase of *ReFresh Milwaukee*, Milwaukeeans stated that both access to local, fresh food and vacant lots/foreclosed homes should be top priorities. HOME GR/OWN's goals and strategies are a direct response to this public input.

Goal:

Increase access to and demand for healthy foods in a targeted low-income Milwaukee neighborhood.

Targets:

- 5 foreclosed structures re-used for residential or commercial end-use that support local food supply chain by July 2014
- 10 vacant lots converted to food-based uses by 2015
- 5 new corner stores serving fresh food and produce by 2015
- Necessary City ordinances/zoning/permitting changes passed by July 2014 that remove obstacles to

developing new real estate disposition strategies, repurposing residential properties to non-residential uses, expanding urban agricultural uses on vacant lots, and establishing micro-business ventures in the local food supply chain.

Priority Strategies:

- Increase the use of city-owned foreclosed land and buildings for growing, processing, and distributing food to catalyze the local food value chain.
- Increase the availability of healthy foods, including locally grown foods, at traditional neighborhood retail outlets in the targeted neighborhood.
- Implement educational initiatives promoting nutrition and training for small businesses and growers.
- Provide creative opportunities to generate income and commercialize urban agriculture.

Milwaukee recently was ranked #8 for the nation's best cities for urban gardening and #3 for community garden density. By way of repurposing our City real estate to revitalize challenged neighborhoods and improving access to local, healthy food, we hope our ranking next year reflects our progress towards a more sustainable community food system.

STAY CONNECTED

We hope you will stay involved. You can follow our progress, and learn how to get involved in Milwaukee neighborhoods:

- **Watch** two videos about our project on [YouTube](#)
- **Visit** [HOME GR/OWN website](#)
- **Follow** us on [Twitter](#)
- **Like** us on [Facebook](#)

A HOME GR/OWN NEIGHBORHOOD



SUSTAINABILITY SUCCESSES

ENERGY UPGRADES IN CITY BUILDINGS SAVE COSTS

OES works with facility managers from City departments to manage and reduce the City's energy costs. This Energy Reduction Team is charged by Mayor Barrett to manage and reduce energy consumption in City operations, as part of the national Better Buildings Challenge.

The Energy Reduction Team follows a six-step process :

1. **Set Goals** (Reduce energy use 20% by 2020)
2. **Measure** city energy consumption using online tracking tools
3. **Prioritize** buildings for energy improvements
4. **Identify** energy saving projects
5. **Implement** Projects
6. **Monitor** for continuous improvement

The City is currently putting energy efficient lights and occupancy sensors in 33 buildings, including Police, Fire, Health, and Public Works Dept, and Port of Milwaukee buildings.

"The LED lighting at Keenan and Southside Health Centers greatly improved the night time visibility, with reduced power consumption." - Health Dept staff

These lighting projects are **expected to save local taxpayers over \$144,000 annually** in electricity costs. Projects are funded by the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act.



Dairyland Electric is employing city residents to install efficient lighting in City properties

ELECTRIC VEHICLE CHARGING STATIONS SEE INCREASE IN USE

OES partnered with the U.S. Department of Energy to bring four electric vehicle charging stations to Milwaukee (funded by American Recovery and Reinvestment Act).

OES installed ChargePoint stations (part of [ChargePoint Network](#)) at City Center, Discovery World, Brady Street parking lot, and the Clarion Hotel.

The results have significantly aided the city in our energy independence efforts. Within the past year, these stations have charged a total of 2,380 kWh for electric vehicles, with the total number of charges per month ever increasing (see chart below).

The charging stations have offset the equivalent of 70.6 gallons of gasoline, or 1,383 pounds of CO₂. With the increasing use of the four current stations we anticipate even greater results in the future.

CAR SHARING PROGRAM EXPANDS IN MILWAUKEE



In late August, Zipcar announced the addition of 29 Zipcars to their car sharing program throughout the Milwaukee area.

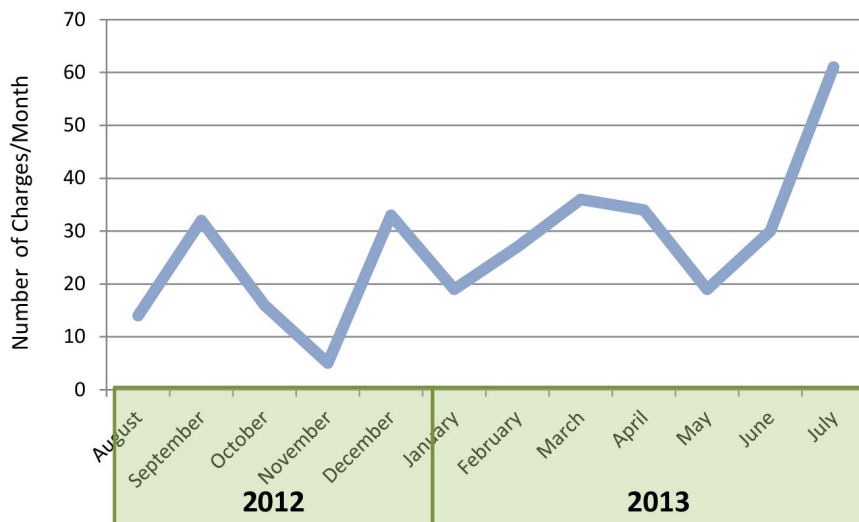
Zipcar will be placing additional vehicles in a variety of neighborhoods (including East Town, Third Ward and Intermodal Station) beginning in September, bringing the total number of Zipcars in Milwaukee to 40.

"Zipcar is expanding because Milwaukee is a great place to invest as more people are choosing to live and work in this vibrant urban community." - Jennifer Mathews, Zipcar

Zipcar was highlighted in Mobility section of Mayor Barrett's *ReFresh Milwaukee* plan. The expansion was made possible due to the support of the City of Milwaukee, OES, Department of City Development, and Department of Public Works.

Get more info Milwaukee Zipcar at www.zipcar.com/milwaukee.

MONTHLY NUMBER OF CHARGES AT CITY EV STATIONS



GET INVOLVED

HOW CAN YOU HELP TO #ReFreshMKE?

Part of the success of *ReFresh Milwaukee* (see page 1) will depend on each of us. Below lists individual actions that can help make a sustainable city. Get more ideas and resources at www.ReFreshMKE.com

TAKE ACTION:

- Read the complete Milwaukee Sustainability Plan: [ReFresh Milwaukee](#)
- [Get a rain barrel from MMSD](#). Install a rain barrel to provide water for your garden and help manage storm water runoff to reduce flooding.
- [Ride or rent a bike](#). Hop on a bike at several bike-share locations through [Midwest Bikeshare](#).
- [Find a bike route](#). Milwaukee provides maps with bike paths and recommended bike routes.
- [Improve your home](#). Reduce your energy bill with incentives and financing through Me².
- [Buy fresh, local food](#): Use the Farm Fresh Atlas to find a farmers market, or look for local food at your grocery store.
- [Shop locally](#): Local businesses keep the community strong and unique.
- [Install solar](#). Become energy independent with help from the city's solar program Milwaukee Shines.
- [Reduce water use](#). Milwaukee's Water Works makes it easy to save this resource and lower your water bill with resources from its Use Water Wisely campaign.
- [Recycle for Good](#): Milwaukee has made recycling even better with easy single-sort recycling and with more materials accepted.
- [Build a community garden](#): Milwaukee allows residents to garden on vacant lots with a simple garden plot permit.
- [Move grass: grow food](#). Take part in the Victory Garden Initiative.
- [Connect with others](#). Attend an event with Green Drinks Milwaukee, a social networking organization of sustainability minded Milwaukeeans.
- Volunteer for an organization that is helping to ReFresh Milwaukee!

SHARE YOUR STORY

Take a photo of what you are doing to ReFresh Milwaukee, and share it with us and via social media.

1. Download the *I AM #ReFresh MKE* sign. [Large](#), [Small](#).
2. Take a picture of how you're helping Milwaukee to be more green and sustainable.
3. Email the photo to sustainability@milwaukee.gov
4. Post your photo to Facebook, Twitter or Instagram with hash tag **#ReFreshMKE**
5. Thank you for your efforts to ReFresh Milwaukee. Together we are creating a sustainable community!



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***About Us:** The Office of Environmental Sustainability (OES) was created by Mayor Tom Barrett to position Milwaukee as a leader in environmental sustainability and performance in the 21st Century. OES promotes economically viable and environmentally sound practices, projects, and initiatives. The Office works with City departments, businesses, non-profits, and residents to reduce material and natural resource consumption while promoting strategies that address the community's critical sustainability needs. Since 2006, OES has successfully attracted over \$20 million in grant funding to help create a more sustainable community. OES is building a smarter city through sustainability.*